

accusation could have destroyed him, if not for the skill of his attorney.

A Yale- and Harvard-educated prosecutor, Butler had once felt different from the Black men he prosecuted, he told *The Washington Post*. But, he said, “I certainly wasn’t different in the way police responded to me.”

He wanted students to think about the inevitable setbacks and traumatic experiences they would face, and how they would confront those with integrity. “The main thing I wanted students to think about,” Butler said, “is justice.”

For Walters, a 23-year-old Black student from Mobile, Ala., the leadership class initially sounded like a welcome break from typical law classes—in which professors grill students with tough questions—during a busy fall when she is also applying for jobs. But Walters, who is president of the Georgetown Law Black Law Students Association, has been struck by a number of the conversations, including Butler’s.

“It has been inspiring to have this class,” Walters said.

As faculty reflect in the class on their own life choices, the odd zigs and zags of their careers, the abject failures that turned out to be gifts and the pinnacles that unexpectedly fell flat, the stories resonated with other students confronting their own imminent decisions.

People are definitely more stressed about careers this fall, said Luke Bunting, a student from Indiana who has worked for Republican members of Congress and is now in his second year at Georgetown Law. He hopes to work for a firm and make an impact, and hearing from people with such different backgrounds and approaches made him more confident that was possible, he said.

Kristin Ewing, a student from Nebraska by way of a musical-theater career in New York, gained an interest in health-care policy when she saw how performers were affected by their lack of insurance. She said it was reassuring to hear professors talk about career pivots.

Rujuta Nandgaonkar, also interested in health policy—an inclination cemented by the pandemic, she said—was struck by Barnett’s advice to surround yourself with people who disagree with you, and an idea several people shared about getting past the inevitable bumps in the road. “Those are important lessons for these times,” she said.

“This is not the greatest time—but there is hope,” Nandgaonkar said. “That’s the string that runs through it.”

Lesser, a high school teacher for four years before law school, isn’t sure what he wants to do after he graduates. But he is considering options that tie into his interests in democracy and criminal justice reform, such as working in a prosecutor’s office, judiciary committees in Congress or for the military.

After hearing Brooks talk, Lesser said, “her lecture reinforced that having a functional modern democracy is a precious thing, and it can get lost easily if people aren’t willing to perfect it.”

The class has been grounding, Lesser said. “It reminds you of why you’re doing this. That’s important, especially when our country is being tested, our field is being tested. You have to reconnect to the values” that brought people to study the law, he said.

Walters had gravitated during law school to apply to firms because she was worried about paying off student loans. But after a summer of protests following George Floyd’s killing in police custody, she witnessed people paint messages about defunding the police near the White House, and was struck by the role public defenders were playing in the community.

The new economic uncertainty and the idealism reinforced by the class reaffirmed

her original commitment to go back to the South—where she grew up not seeing Black lawyers, she said—and work as a public defender.

“I’m kind of grateful to be able to do what I’m passionate about,” Walters said. “I think it would be great to go back there and try to make it the best place it could be.”

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent but had I been present would have voted yes on rollcall vote 225, motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of James Ray Knepp II, to be a United States District Court Judge for the Northern District of Ohio.

It was necessarily absent but had I been present would have voted yes on rollcall vote 226, on the nomination of James Ray Knepp II, to be a United States District Court Judge for the Northern District of Ohio.

ETHIOPIA

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise today to call upon the administration to take urgent diplomatic action to address the escalating conflict in Ethiopia, a country in the midst of what many in the international community, including myself, had hoped would be a historic political transition to democracy. Instead the country is sliding into civil war. Unless the international community acts quickly to forestall further violence, I fear that bloody and protracted conflict is unavoidable.

Ethiopians have long aspired to participate in a democratic system of government. For years, their leaders let them down, but in 2018, things appeared to change when in response to peaceful popular protests centered in Ethiopia’s Oromo and Amhara regions, Ethiopia’s ruling party elevated Abiy Ahmed to Prime Minister. Prime Minister Abiy undertook dramatic political reform in the first year of his administration, releasing thousands of political prisoners, inviting exiled opposition groups back home, and allowing the press to freely operate. Repressive laws like the Charities and Societies and Anti-Terrorism proclamations, which had long been used to stifle political dissent, were revised and replaced. The new government committed itself to free and fair elections and, for the first time in Ethiopia’s history, introduced a gender-balanced Cabinet. Many Ethiopians and much of the international community rightly celebrated these achievements and looked to further democratic progress. Abiy himself was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2019.

Yet transitions from autocratic rule to democracy are rarely seamless, and Ethiopia’s transition is no exception. The journey to democracy has been beset by the proliferation of ethnically motivated violence across the country. In 2018, IOM reported that Ethiopia re-

corded the third highest number of new ID P’s anywhere in the world, fueled by ethnic violence and displacement in Gedeo and West Guji zones, and violence has continued. In June 2019, rogue regional security forces assassinated the president of Amhara region and the head of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces, and in June 2020, the murder of popular Oromo singer Hachalu Hundessa triggered violence that killed at least 239 people. Sadly, Ethiopians of all ethnic and religious backgrounds have been victims of this endless cycle of senseless violence.

To be clear, there are some who have taken advantage of new-found freedoms to threaten or use violence to achieve political ends, engage in hate speech, and incite broader conflict. Such behavior is inconsistent with democratic practice and has further exacerbated the country’s ethnic and political divisions in a profoundly damaging way. Ethiopian authorities have a responsibility to protect their citizens by holding the perpetrators and purveyors of such actions accountable through a transparent, credible legal process.

Yet the government’s response to these challenges has only complicated matters. In May 2020, a report from Amnesty International chronicled a long list of abuses committed by Ethiopia’s security forces since the transition began, including extrajudicial killings, torture, and arbitrary arrest. The government has engaged in a troubling crackdown on political opposition, media organizations, and civil society, particularly in the wake of Hachalu Hundessa’s death. There are growing fears that state institutions are being leveraged by the ruling party to unfairly consolidate the current government’s power, including through weaponizing law enforcement and the judicial process to attack government critics. Under these conditions, it is unlikely that Ethiopia’s next general elections can be anything approaching credible, exacerbating an already volatile political situation.

Against the backdrop of a transition in jeopardy, violence between the federal government and political leaders of the Tigray region is escalating. Reports suggest that hundreds have already died in clashes between government and regional forces. I am particularly horrified by evidence of a civilian massacre in Mai-Kadra. I condemn this act and all attacks on civilians in the strongest term, and call for a thorough and transparent investigation by a credible, neutral, independent body. Those who attack civilians must be held accountable in accordance with the rule of law. I am also concerned by reports of civilian deaths as a result of federal government airstrikes, mass displacement, and discrimination and arrests based on ethnic profiling. Authorities in Tigray have confirmed that their forces fired rockets into the capital of a neighboring country, Eritrea.

These rocket attacks constitute a significant escalation, are counter-productive, and should cease. They further underscore fears that the conflict will expand beyond Ethiopia's borders. If left to continue, the conflict in Tigray will not only lead to a catastrophic loss of life and worsening humanitarian conditions, but will breed further enmity that will derail Ethiopia's democratic progress and destabilize the entire subregion.

We cannot afford to let that happen. Ethiopia is the second most populous African country, home to the African Union, and one of the world's top contributors to UN peacekeeping missions a tradition that dates back to the Korean war. It has been a pillar of U.S. engagement in the Horn of Africa for decades, partnering with the U.S. on counterterrorism and with the U.S. and international community to stabilize protracted conflicts in neighboring Somalia and South Sudan.

The Ethiopian people need peace, not war; and the world needs a stable, democratic and prosperous Ethiopia.

I urge the federal government and the leaders of Tigray region to choose the path of peace. While it is tempting to assign blame for the outbreak of hostilities, our collective focus must be on how to restore order. Make no mistake, a full accounting must take place. Right now, however, both sides must agree to an immediate ceasefire and begin a sustained dialogue to settle political differences.

I also call on Prime Minister Abiy to take a series of actions to facilitate a successful democratic transition. First, barring immediate and incontrovertible evidence of serious crimes, he should release all members of the political opposition. Their continued detention is unacceptable, and I am troubled by reports that their judicial proceedings are being politicized. Second, media and digital rights must be respected. Arresting journalists and imposing internet blackouts harkens back to the dark days of the previous regime. Mr. Prime Minister, such practices must end. You and your colleagues have taken bold action to chart a new course for the country, and I urge you to continue along the difficult path of reform.

Third, the Prime Minister should empower an independent and impartial body to investigate and ascertain responsibility for past acts of violence beyond those related to current hostilities in Tigray. Finally, I call on the Prime Minister to engage in an inclusive dialogue with relevant stakeholders in advance of elections to ensure there is a level playing field and buy-in to the electoral process from all stakeholders.

Although resolving the current crisis requires Ethiopian commitment and action, the United States, along with others in the international community, have a critical role to play. I therefore urge the administration to do the following:

Lead international diplomatic efforts—the administration must reach out to multilateral institutions, allies and partners in the region, the Gulf, and elsewhere to ensure unity around a single message to the federal government and officials in Tigray, there is no military solution to the conflict between the federal government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front. Dialogue is the only path forward. A joint delegation should demarche the Prime Minister with this message and reach out to leaders in Tigray with the same.

Increase support for Ethiopia's democratic transition—the administration should redouble its efforts to support the transition by providing the Embassy and USAID mission with more staff to provide increased monitoring in the areas of democracy and human rights and increased technical assistance in the area of election administration. Funding for grassroots conflict mitigation and reconciliation is critical given ongoing tensions. The United States must also engage all Ethiopian stakeholders, including traditionally marginalized populations, without favor or bias, with the goal of encouraging dialogue between the country's rival political forces. Political disagreements must be settled through peaceful means.

Take an informed, organized, and holistic approach. Civil war in Ethiopia will destabilize the Horn of Africa and has implications for U.S. geostrategic interests in the Horn of Africa and Red Sea corridor writ large. It is critical that the U.S. approach diplomatic engagement in a holistic manner, recognizing the potential ripple effects of prolonged conflict. Negotiations between Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt relative to the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam—GERD—are only one example of how the conflict could impact stability in the subregion. Progress on the GERD talks is highly unlikely in the face of civil war, since Ethiopia is likely to remain focused on its domestic problems.

Unfortunately, the U.S. approach is currently fractured. The administration has engaged in GERD negotiations as though they are unfolding in a vacuum, divorced from our interests in a strong bilateral partnership with Ethiopia and absent a broader strategy for the Horn of Africa and Red Sea corridor. Even in the parochial context in which we have engaged in GERD negotiations, the administration's actions have, quite frankly, been unhelpful. Having Treasury Department lead the talks was never wise. Treasury lacks the deep regional knowledge and expertise to lead such sensitive negotiations, and there is no evidence that its actions were developed as part of an interagency strategy or policy approach informed by such expertise. It is imperative that a sound strategy be developed and that the State Department take the lead on an integrated diplomatic approach to both the country and the subregion.

Ethiopia faces historic challenges. These challenges can only be met through diplomacy, dialogue, and compromise. The country has a once in a generation opportunity that we must not let slip away. I urge the administration to act while there is still time.

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR CATHERINE "CATIE" SHUTTERS SUNDIN

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, today, I rise to pay tribute to MAJ Catherine "Catie" Shuttters Sundin and her service as an officer in the U.S. Army. I am especially grateful for her support to my office as an Army congressional fellow from January to December 2017 and, later, as the Army congressional budget liaison, where she supported my responsibilities as the ranking member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs. Major Shuttters Sundin will complete her military service in November after more than 12 years of honorable service.

A native of Muskegon, MI, Major Shuttters Sundin entered the military as a paralegal in the Indiana Army National Guard. After completing her initial military training, she attended Wentworth Military Academy and Junior College in Lexington, MO, where she commissioned as a second lieutenant. She completed her undergraduate degree in sociology at the University of Central Missouri and accessed into Active-Duty status as an aviation officer. She attended flight school at Fort Rucker, AL, in 2008, graduating as a UH-60 Blackhawk pilot. She also has a master's degree in legislative affairs from the George Washington University.

Major Shuttters Sundin has served in a number of assignments during her Army career. Her first assignment as an aviation officer was with the 5th Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, KY. As a small unit leader in Alpha Company, she deployed her platoon to multiple joint training exercises and ultimately to Khost Province in eastern Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom 12-13. While in combat, she served as task force intelligence officer, where she was charged with leading an intelligence unit that provided threat analysis, briefings to aircrews and leadership, and assisted military decision making.

Upon redeployment, Major Shuttters Sundin attended the Maneuver Captains Career Course at Fort Benning, GA, in preparation for her company command at Hunter Army Airfield, GA. There, she commanded Bravo Company, 4th Battalion, 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade from January 2014 to February 2016. Major Shuttters Sundin's team of 42 personnel and 10 UH-60M assault helicopters supported a number of training exercises to include a 9-month deployment in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve. Bravo Company was the first aviation unit to be a